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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 4 USNATO 5827

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPOL, NATO, BE
SUBJECT: BELGIAN FORCES FOR NATO

REF: A. STATE 048627
B. STATE 159115
C. USNATO 4362
D. DPC/D(74)5, BELGIUM

BEGIN SUMMARY: REPLY TO DPQ(74) INDICATES BELGIUM INITIATING ITS NEW PROFESSIONALIZATION PLAN ESSENTIALLY AIMED AT INCREASING PROPORTION OF

REGULARS, WHILE GRADUCALLY REDUCING LENGTH OF CONSCRIPT SERVICE TO SIX

MONTHS. DPQ(74) PROJECTS SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN REGULAR/CONSCRIPT RATION BY 1978, BUT WARNS THAT ESTIMATES ARE TENTATIVE. INCREASED COMBAT ROLES FOR REGULARS COUPLED WITH LIMITING ROLES OF CONSCRIPTS TO

SUPPORT AND INTERIOR DEFENSE TASKS IS A MAJOR CONCOMITANT OF PROFESSIONALIZATION PLAN. IT IS TOO EARLY TO JUDGE EVOLUTION OF PLAN WHICH BELGIUM HAS PORTRAYED AS OFFERING MILITARY ADVANTAGES TO NATO AND POLITICAL ADVANTAGES TO BELGIUM. BELGIUM AGAIN PLEDGES
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TO INCREASE ITS DEFENSE
SPENDING BY AN ANNUAL AVERAGE OF FOUR PERCENT IN CONSTANT PRICES. DPQ(74) REPORTS BELGIUM IS IMPLEMENTING THIS PLEDGE; HOWEVER, BELGIANS APPARENTLY INCLUDE PROFESSIONALIZATION PLAN FUNDING AS

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PART OF REAL INCREASE WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY MAINTAINING PROFESS-
IONALIZATION PLAN IS FUNDED SEPARATELY FROM ANNUAL FOUR PERCENT
REAL INCREASE. BELGIUM MEETS 1974 NATO FORCE COMMITMENT, AND
PROJECTED 1975-1979 FORCE STRUCTURE GENERALLY ACCORDS WITH NATO
FOCE GOALS. EQUIPMENT MODERNIZATION PLANS EMPHASIZE BASIC
ISSUES FORCE IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDING PRIORITY FORCE GOALS US
IDENTIFIED DURING SPRING DRC REVIEW, BUT BELGIAN MODERNIZATION
PROGRAM LEAVES CONSIDERABLE ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT. MISSION PRO-
POSES AT NATO'S MULTILATERAL REVIEW TO: (A) MONITOR PROFESSION-
ALIZATION PLAN, INCLUDING ITS FINANCIAL ASPECTS, AND (B) PUSH
FOR GREATER IMPLEMENTATION OF BASIC ISSUES IMPROVEMENTS.
END SSUMMARY.

1. FORCES.
A. ARMY. BELGIUM MEETS MAJOR UNIT COMMITMENT TO NATO UNDER-
TAKEN IN 1974, INCLUDING BUILDUP OF AN ADDITIONAL CAT AA1 TANK
BATTALION. 1975 MAJOR UNIT COMMITMENT IS SAME AS 1974 FORCE
STRUCTURE. BELGIUM REPORTS ONE PARA-COMMANDO REGIMENT AS
"OTHER FORCES" FOR NATO. FORCE STRUCTURE PROJECTED THROUGH 1979
ACCORDS WITH NATO FORCE GOALS (REF D); PROJECTION INCLUDES
INTRODUCTION OF LANCE(REPLACING HONEST JOHN) IN 1978 (1L11).
TO RATIONALIZE MEDICAL CARE, BELGIUM IS REORGANIZING ITS MEDICAL
SERVICE (WHICH PREVIOUSLY BELONGED TO ARMY) INTO AN INTERSERVICE
MEDICAL SERVICE. ARMY NOW PLANS TO COMPLETE PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED
REDEPLOYMENT OF TWO MECHANIZED BRIGADES FROM GERMANY TO BELGIUM
IN 1976 AND 1977 RESPECTIVELY. STARTING JULY 1, 1975, 12TH
MOTORIZED INFANTRY BRIGADE BECAME AVAILABLE FOR ASSIGNMENT TO
NATO AT M-15, AND BELGIANS PLAN TO MAKE IT AVAILABLE AT M-15 IF
THE SITUATION IN BELGIUM PERMITS (1L22).

(1) EQUIPMENT AND LOGISTICS. MODERNIZATION PROGRAM
FOLLOWS NATO FORCE GOALS, WITH EMPHASIS ON BASIC ISSUES.

(A) ARMOR/ANTI-ARMOR. PLANNED REORGANIZATION OF
TANK BATTALIONS HAS BEGUN IN PREPARATION FOR PHASING OUT M47
TANKS IN TWO CAT C-3 BRIGADES. BELGIANS HAVE REDUCED NUMBER OF
LEOPARD TANKS PER TANK BATTALIION FROM 49 TO 40. A SIXTH CAT A1
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TANK BATTALION, THE 3D LANCER, BECAME OPERATIONAL SEPTEMBER 1,
1974. BELGIANS WILL PROCURE 28 ADDITIONAL LEOPARD TANKS BETWEEN
1975 AND 1979. STARTING IN 1975 BELGIANS WILL INTRODUCE THE FIRST
OF 80 JAGDPANZER (JPK) TANK DESTROYERS INTO THEIR CAT A INFRANTY
BATTALIONS. TOTAL COST OF JPK PROGRAM IS BF 1.55 BILLION. THE
JPK MOUNTS A 90 MM GUN. BASIS OF DISTRIBUTION IS EIGHT PER
BATTALION, ORGANIZED INTO TWO PLATOONS (1L03). EACH INFANTRY
BATTALION WILL ALSO CONTAIN A MEDIUM MISSILE PLATOON. STARTING
IN 1976, BELGIANS WILL REPLACE ENTAC BY MILIAN MISSILES; PLANS
CALL FOR PURCHASE OF 120 LAUNCHERS AND 2530 MISSILES. FOR
INDIVIDUAL ARMAMENT, BELGIANS WILL PROCURE 8,925 IAW IN 1974,
9,090 IN 1975 AND REALIZE A TOTAL INVENTORY OF 40,000 BY 1978.
CONFIRMING DPQ(73), DPQ(74) SHOWS ACQUISITION OF 286 CVRT

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(TRACKED COMBAT RECONNAISSANCE VEHICLES) FOR SCOUT, ANTI-TANK, AND RECONNAISSANCE UNITS. ARMY WILL FIT FORTY-THREE SWINGFIRE AT MISSILE SYSTEMS ON CVRTS DURING 1975-76. MEMORANDUM STATES THAT BELGIANS PLANNED COMPARISON TRIALS OF SHORT RANGE SYSTEMS IN THE SUMMER OF 1974, AND SPCIAL DISTRIBUTION EQUIPMENT TABLES SHOW PROCUREMENT OF 261 CARL GUSTAV OR ACL APX BY 1979. BELGIANS PLAN TO PROCURE ATTACK HELICOPTERS EQUIPPED WITH LONG RANGE AT MISSILE SYSTEMS BEFORE THE END OF THE PLANNING PERIOD (1L14). DPQ(74) DOES NOT SPECIFY NUMBER OF ATTACH HELICOPTERS, AND BELGIAN GOVERNMENT HAS NOT YET APPROVED THIS BF 1.8 BILLION PROGRAM.

(B) WAR RESERVE STOCKS. DPQ(74) SHOWS 30 DAY MUNITIONS STOCK LEVELS FOR ALL SYSTEMS CURRENTLY IN THE FORCES, EXCEPT FOR HONEST JOHN AND ENTAC WHICH BELGIANS ARE PHASING OUT. STOCK LEVELS FOR NEW MUNITIONS, E.G., MILAN, LANCE, BUILD UP TO 30 DAYS BY 1979, EXCEPT FOR 30 MM CVRT CANNON (16DAYS). BELGIANS HAVE BUILT UP WAR RESERVE STOCKS FOR 12TH MOTORIZED INFANTRY BRIGADE TO THE SAME LEVEL AS THEIR OTHER BRIGADES (1L20).

(C) AIR DEFENSE. BETWEEN 1977-1980, BELGIAN ARMY WILL RECEIVE 55 GUEPARD 35 MM ANTI-AIRCRAFT WEAPONS (1L12), AT A TOTAL COST OF BF 6.950 BILLION. BELGIUM IS NOT PARTICIPATING IN THE IMPROVED HAWK PROGRAM (1L23), AND DPQ(74) STATES ACQUISITION OF NEW MISSILE SYSTEM FOR REAR AREA PROTECTION WILL START AT THE EARLIEST IN 1980.

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(D) ELECTRONIC WARFARE. DPQ (74) DOES NOT ADDRESS FORCE GOALS 1L07 OR 1L24). REFERENCE TO OTHER FORCE GOALS PERTAINING TO EW IS VERY SKETCHY AND CREATES INFERENCE THAT BELGIAN ARMY IS NOT DOING MUCH IN THIS AREA. ARMY IS CONSIDERING MOVING

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THE 44TH SIGNAL COMPANY FROM BELGIUM TO FRG (1L04),AND IS
PARTICIPATING IN PANEL VI WORK IN NATO (1L05). DPQ(74) STATES
THAT PLANS FOR IMPROVING COMMUNICATIONS USED BY 1(BE) CORPS (1L02)
INCLUDE PROVISIONS TO PROVIDE AN ECCM CAPABILITY FOR ALL NEW
ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT (1L06). BELGIANS ARE STUDYING THE PROBLEM
OF EW PROTECTIVE MEASURES FOR ARMY AIRCRAFT (1L08).

(2) PERSONNEL. ARMY REPORTS SLIGHT DECLINE IN TOTAL
ACTIVE DUTY STRENGTH (FROM 61,375 IN 1973 TO 60,748 IN 1974):
THE REGULAR/CONSCRIPT RATIO OF APPROXIMATELY 1:1 REMAINS VIRUTALLY
UNCHANGED. BELGIANS EXPECT THAT BY 1976 NEW PROFESSIONALIZATION
PLAN WILL STABILIZE ARMY ACTIVE STRENGTH AT 58,123 AND THE
REGULAR/CONSCRIPT RATION AT 44,635/13,488, OR ROUGHLY 3.3:1.
DPQ(74) CAUTIONS THAT THESE FIGURES MIGHT UNDERGO MODIFICATION,
BUT BELGIUM WILL CONTINUE TO FULFILL ALL ITS NATO OBLIGATIONS.
AT NATO'S 1973 MULTILATERAL REVIEW, BELGIANS REPORTED THAT, UNDER
THEIR PROFESSIONALIZATION PLAN, THEY WOULD INCREASE MANNING OF
EARMARKED AND ASSIGNED COMBAT UNITS TO 100 PERCENT WAR AUTHORIZED
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STRENGTH (WAS) AND MAN THESE UNITS EXCLUSIVELY WITH
REGULARS. DPQ(74), WHILE STATING THAT BELGIUM
CANNOT PROJECT PRECISE FIGURES CONCERNING MANNING
LEVELS OR REGULAR/CONSCRIPT RATION, MAKES NO COMMITMENT TO INCREASE
PEACETIME MANNING OF COMBAT UNITS. TOTAL ARMY WAS DECREASED
FROM 192,036 IN 1973 TO 109,370 IN 1974 AND STABILIZES AT THIS
LEVEL THROUGHOUT THE PLANNING PERIOD. TOTAL NUMBER OF RESERVISTS
ALL TO BE RECALLED WITHIN THE FIRST 15 DAYS OF MOBILIZATION,
REMAINS VIRUTALLY UNCHANGED THROUGHOUT THE PLANNING PERIOD
(132,135 IN 1974, FLUCTUATING SLIGHTLY AS IT PROGRESSES TO
133,326 IN 1979). NUMBER OF RESERVISTS CALLED UP FOR ANNUAL
TRAINING INCREASED BY ALMOST 100 PERCENT FROM 7,979 (1973) TO
13,413(1974; MAJORITY RECEIVED APPROXIMATELY 15 DAYS OF
TRAINING IN 1974, LAST YEAR FOR WHICH TRAINING DATA ARE PROJECTED.
NUMBER OF ACTIVE DUTY NATO COMMITTED AND "OTHER FORCES" PERSONNEL
REMAINS UNCHANGED AT 25,181 BETWEEN 1974 AND 1979, BUT NUMBER
OF PERSONNEL UNDER NATIONAL COMMAND DECREASES FROM 25,567
TO 22,942.

B. NAVY. BELGIUM ASSIGNS NATO-COMMITTED NAVAL FORCES TO
CINCHAN. NAVY MEETS 1974 COMMITMENT TO NATO. 1975, COMMITMENT
TO NATO IS FOR SAME NUMBER OF SHIPS (WITH A COASTAL MINEHUNTER
REPLACING A COASTAL MINESWEEPER) AT SLGITHLY ADJUSTED OPERATIONAL
READINESS STATUS. BELGIUM MAINTAINS UNDER NATIONAL COMMAND (BUT
EARMARKED FOR COMMON DEFENSE OF ACCHAN SECTOR) 20 MINE COUNTER-
MEASURE (MCM) PROBLMATION OF MCM FORCE (3M03/13), ESSENTIALLY
ACCORD WITH NATO 1975-80 FORCE GOALS (REF D).

(1) EQUIPMENT AND LOGISTICS. MODERNIZATION PROGRAM
INCLUDES IMPLEMENTATION OF MOST NATO FORCE GOALS (AND US PRIORITY
FORCE GOALS, REFS A AND D). CONSTRUCTION OF NEW ASW ESCORTS
EQUIPPED WITH SEA SPARROW MISSILE SYSTEM IS PROCEEDING ON

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SCHEDULE (3M15). DURING 1973 NATO TRILATERAL EXAMINATION, BEGLIUM STATED ITS INTENTION TO EQUIP ASW ESCORTS WITH EXCET SURFACE-TO-SURFACE MISSILE (3M16); REPLY TO DPQ(74) DOES NOT SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS THIS GOAL. NAVY IS ALSO EQUIPPING ASW ESCORTS WITH FRENCH L5 TORPEDO (3M17). MODERNIZATION/RESTRUCTURING (CONVERTING COASTAL MINESWEEPERS TO MINEHUNTERS) OF MCM FORCE IS UNDERWAY. NAVY IS EQUIPPING EXISTING FORCE WITH REMOTE CONTROL MINE DISPOSAL EQUIPMENT AND MODERN SONAR WHICH, ACCORDING TO MEMORANDUM, EXTENDS USEFUL SHIP LIFE BY 10 YEARS. REGARDING
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FORCE GOAL TO CONSTRUCT NEW GENERATION OF MCM VESSESL (3M18), BELGIUM PLANS TO PHASE OUT REMAINING EXISTING COASTAL AND INSHORE MINESWEEPERS (BEGINNING IN 1980) AND OCEAN MINESWEEPERS/HUNTERS (BEGINNING IN 1985). THE FIRST NEW GENERATION SHIP WILL ENTER SERVICE IN 1980(MOST LIKELY JOINT RESEARCH AND PRODUCED MINEHUNTER). BELGIUM IS STUDYING OTHER LONG TERM MCM EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS. BELGIUM INTENDS TO COMPLETE THE STUDY BY END-1974. KPQ(74) ENVISAGES THAT FUTURES MCM FORCE WILL INCLUDE SOPHISTICATED HOVERCRAFTS AND HELICOPTERS AND TAKE MAXIMUM ADVANTAGE OF COOPERATIVE PROJECTS. NAVY IS STUDYING ACQUISITION OF AN UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT SHIP UNDER OPERATIONAL COMMAND OF CINCHAN (3M02). BELGIUM IS CONTINUING IMPROVEMENTS TO SHIPBORNE AND SHORE COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS; DPQ(74) STRESSES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM WILL TAKE FULL ACCOUNT OF ONGOING STANDARDIZATION ACTIVITIES. DPQ(74) REPORTS NO NEW IMPROVEMENTS, HOWEVER WE UNDERSTAND NAVY IS PROCURING EW DECOYS FROM US. DPQ(74) REPORTS PROGRESS IN CONSTRUCTION OF NEW NAVAL BASE AT ZEEBRUGGE (PROBABLY OPERATIONAL IN 1978), WHICH WILL ENHANCE CENTRAL REGION'S RECEPTION FACILITIES FOR REINFORCEMENT FORCES. NATIONAL GOAS IF FOR 30 DAYS OF WAR RESERVES (CONSUMPTION RATES BASED ON SACEUR'S PLANNING GUIDANCE). ACTUAL AND PRO-JECTED STOCK LEVELS EXCEPT FOR 40 MM AMMO (PHAIUING OUT) AND 375 MM ROCKET LAUNCHERS (BEING INTRODUCED) MEET OR EXCEED 30 DAY REQUIREMENT. MEMORANDUM INDICATES, IN LIGHT OF INTRO-DUCTION IN 1970'S OF NEW GENERATION OF MINESWEEPING VESSELS, BELGIUM DOES NOT INTEND TO INCREASE STOCKS OF EXISTING MINE-SWEEPING FORCE.

(2) PERSONNEL. NAVY PROJECTS INCREASED ACTIVE DUTY STRENGTH FROM 4,177 (1974) TO 4,320 (1978). IN ACCORD WITH NEW "PROFESSIONALIZATION" PLAN, REGULARS INCREASE FROM 2,636 (1974) TO 3,713(1978), WHILE CONSCRIPTS DECREASE FROM 1,551 (1974) TO 607(1978). REGULARS INCREASE FROM APPROXIMATELY 63 TO 86 PERCENT OF NAVAL FORCE. DPQ(74), HOWEVER, EMPHASIZES TENTATIVE NATURE OF THESE ESTIMATES SINCE RECRUITMENT PROGRAM IS OFF TO SLOW START. NAVY FORECASTS A MODEST GROWTH IN SEA BILLETS FROM 1,250 TO 1,400. ADDITIONAL SEA BILLETS SHOULD BELP MEET PERSONNEL DEMANDS OF NEW ASW ESCORTS AS SHOULD SPECIAL TRAINING OUTSIDE OF BELGIUM FOR PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO NEW ESCORTS. PROJECTED STRENGTH IS ROUGHLY 50 PERCENT OF WAS. APPROXIMATELY 20 THOUSAND RESERVISTS, OF WHOM ROUGHLY

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ONE-THIRD CAN BE RECALLED WITH FIRST 15 DAYS OF MOBILIZATION,
ARE ON THE ROLLS. DPQ(74) CONTRASTS WITH EARLIER DPQ REPORTS THAT
RESERVE ROLLS WOULD BE DRASTICALLY REDUCED. BELGIUM SCHEDULES
SMALL NUMBER OF RESERVISTS FOR ANNUAL REFRESHER TRAINING: 840
IN 1974; 830 IN 1975. NAVY MANS CAT A SHIPS AT 100 PERCENT OF WAS
(WITH 74 PERCENT REGULARS) AND CAT B AND C AT 40 PERCENT OF WAS
(WITH 27 PERCENT REGULARS).

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C. BELGIUM MEETS HER 1974 COMMITMENT TO NATO.
1975 COMMITMENT IS SAME AS 1974. PROJECTED FORCE STRUCTURE
MOVES TOWARD SATISFYING MOST NATO FORCE GOALS (REF D). DPQ(74)
INDICATES THAT BELGIUM PLANS TO BEGIN REPLACEMENT OF F-104G
DURING THEPLANNING PERIOD (WITH DECISION ON TYPE EARLY IN
1975) AND TO INTRODUCE EIGHTH MIKE SAM SQUADRON IN 1976.
BELGIUM, HOWEVER, DOES NOT PLAN TO PROCURE A SAM-LO BATTERY
FOR EACH OF THE THREE FIGHTER BOMBER AIRBASIS (1A02), AND
ANTICIPATED ATTRITION MAY CAUSE UE OF MIRAGE RECCE SQUADRON TO
DROP FROM 21 TO 18.

(1) EQUIPMENT AND LOGISTICS. MAJORITY OF PLANNED FORCE
IMPROVEMENTS ARE IN LINE WITH NATO FORCE GOALS WHICH INCORPORATE
BASIC ISSUES (INCLUDING MOST OF PRIORITY IMPROVEMENTS US
IDENTIFIED DURING SPRING 1974 DRC FORCE GOAL REVIEW). SUMMARY
OF BASIC ISSUE IMPROVEMENTS FOLLOWS:

(A) AIRFIELD PROTECTION/AIR DEFENSE. BELGIUM IS
INCREASING ITS PROTECTION OF AIRBASES, NADGE CONTROL CENTERS,

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AND NIKE BATTERIES WITH PHASING IN OF FAIR WEATHER, SHORT
RANGE VULCAN 20 MM GUN AS REPLACEMENT TO EXISTING 50 CALIBER
MACHINE GUN BEGINNING IN 1974(1A02 AND 07). AIR FORCE INTENDS
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TO PROVIDE NIGHT/ALL WEATHER CAPABILITY AFTER 1975(TYPE OF
SYSTEM UNDER STUDY). AIR FORCE IS ALSO IMPLEMENTING OR PLANS
OTHER PROTECTIVE MEASURES SUCH AS AIRCRAFT DISPERSAL, TONS
DOWN, CAOUFLAGE, INSTALLATION OF DECOYS AND RAPID RUNWAY
REPAIR. AIRFORCE DOES NOT PLAN, AS CITED ABOVE, TO PROCURE
SAM-LO BATTERIES (1A02) AND WILL NOT REPLACE EXISTING NIKE
(WHICH THEY CONSIDER ADEQUATE FOR DURATION OF PLANNING PERIOD)
UNTIL POST 1980 PERIOD (1A24). CURRENT AIRCRAFT SHELTER PROGRAM
PROJECTS COMPLETION OF SHELTERS AT FOUR AIRFIELDS BY END-1975
AND A FIFTH BY END-1976 FOR A TOTAL OF 104 SHELTERS. BELGIUM
IS CONSIDERING PROVISION OF 38 SHELTERS THROUGH NATIONAL FUNDING,
BUT ASSIGNES THIS PROJECT A LOW PRIORITY (1A23).

(B) ELECTRONIC WARFARE. BELGIANS ARE IN STUDY
PHASE TO PLACE ACTIVE AND PASSIVE ECM EQUIPMENT ON MIRAGE
AIRCRAFT BY 1977 (1A05) AND INTEND TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF ECM AND
ECCM (1A09) REQUIREMENTS IN SELECTION OF F-104 REPLACEMENT.
BELGIUM IS WILLING TO EXAMINE WITH NATO PARTNERS POSSIBILITY OF
A MANNED AIRBORNE JAMMING SUPPORT SYSTEM (1A06). CURRENT ECM/
ECCM TRAINING IS LIMITED TO STAFF OFFICER INSTRUCTION. AIR FORCE
IS WILLING TO INVESTIGATE WITH HER NATO PARTNERS MORE COMPREHENSIVE
ECM/ECCM TRAINING; AIR FORCE BELIEVES THIS TRAINING SHOULD BE
PARTIALLY COMMON FUNDED. BELGIUM IS STUDING MODERNIZATION IFF
SYSTEMS (1A11) IN POST-1980 PERIOD. SAMCAP MODIFICATION WILL
IMPROVE NIKE ECCM CAPABILITY.

(C) WAR RESERVES. BY END-1975 AIR FORCE WILL
REACH 30 DAY STOCK LEVEL (BASED ON SHAPE STOCKPILING GUIDANCE)
FOR ALL REPORTED ITEMS, EXCEPT SIDEWINDER AIR-TO-AIR MISSILE
(15 DAYS) WHICH BELGIANS WILL REPLACE WITH AIM-9B CONVERTED TO
9J STATUS AFTER 1975. DPQ(74) PROJECTS END-1979 STOCK LEVEL OF
30 DAYS FOR ALL ITEMS. DPQ(74) REPORTS MODERNIZATION OF AIR
MUNITION INVENTORY THROUGH INTRODUCTION OF CLUSTER BOMBS FOR
F-104 STRIKE/ATTACK AIRCRAFT AND DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN 2.75
ROCKET WARHEAD DESIGNED FOR USE AGAINST HANGARS AND RUNWAYS
(1A08): WE UNDERSTAND 2.75 ROCKET PROGRAM TEMPORARILY DELAYED
BY BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS. AIR FORCE IS ALSO IMPLEMENTING OTHER
THAN BASIC ISSUES IMPRVEMENTS. BELGIANS ARE IMPROVING NIGHT
CAPABILITY OF MIRAGE, PARTIALLY THROUGH INTRODUCTION OF
IR (1A03). AIR FORCE HAS STARTED PROCUREMENT OF
MODERN COMMUNICATIONS AIRCRAFT (HAWKER SIDDELEY 748) AND WILL
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INTRODUCE ALPHA JET TRAINER BEGINNING IN 1978 (REPLACING T-33
AND FOUGA TRAINING AIRCRAFT). AIR FORCE IS CONTINUING TO

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IMPROVE ITS AIRCRAFT CROSS SERVICING CAPABILITY (1A13) AND NBC PROTECTIVE POSTURE (1A16/17). AIR FORCE IS PARTICIPATING IN STUDIES OF AN AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM OPTIMIZED FOR NATO (1A27). REGARDING FORCE GOAL 1A20 DEALING WITH RECEPTION AND SUPPORT OF AUGMENTATION FORCES, MEMORANDUM INDICATES BELGIUM HAS TAKEN NO ACTION SINCE SHAPE HAS NOT INFORMED BELGIUM OF SHAPE REQUIREMENTS.

(2) PERSONNEL. AIR FORCE PROJECTS SLIGHT DECLINE IN ACTIVE DUTY STRENGTH FROM 20,140 (1974) TO 19,695 (1978/79) WITH REGULARS (IN ACCORD WITH NEW PROFESSIONALIZATION PLAN) INCREASING TO 17,505 BY 1978 FROM 1974 LEVEL OF 14,657 AND CONSCRIPTS DE-CREASING TO 2,190 BY 1978 FROM 1974 LEVEL OF 5,493. DPQ(74) WARNS THAT THESE ESTIMATES MAY UNDERGO MODIFICATION, BUT BELGIUM WILL CONTINUE TO FULFILL ITS NATO OBLIGATIONS. HENCE REGULARS ARE PROJECTED TO INCREASE FROM 73 TO 98 PERCENT OF ACTIVE FORCE. DPQ(74) REPORTS RESERVISTS ROLLS DECREASE FROM 55,660 AT END-1974 TO 30,000 BY END-1975 DUE TO PROBABLE REDUCTION IN TOTAL MILITARY OBLIGATION FROM 15 TO 8 YEARS. DESPITE REDUCTION, SOME 11,000 RESERVISTS (ADEQUATE NUMBER TO BRIDGE GAP BETWEEN ACTIVE STRENGTH AND WAS) CONTINUE TO BE AVAILABLE FOR RECALL DURING FIRST 15 DAYS OF MOBILIZATION. AIR FORCE REPORTS AN INCREASE IN RESERVISTS RECEIVING ANNUAL REFRESHER TRAINING FROM 981(1973), TO 1,368 (1974), TO 1,696(1974), LEVELING OFF AT 1,500 FOR REMAINDER OF PLANNING PERIOD; ACTUAL 1973 FIGURE OF 981 IS CONSIDERABLY LOWER THAN DPQ(73) ESTIMATE OF 1,680. FUEL ECONOMY MEASURES HAVE CAUSED MODERATE REDUCTIONS IN COMBAT AIRCRAFT FLYING HOURS WHICH RANGE PER CREW FROM 184 AND 202 HOURS IN 1973 AND FROM 200 TO 210 IN 1974. AIRCREW/AIRCRAFT RATION IN 1973 RANGED FROM 1.34 TO 1.49; AIR FORCE EXPECTS ESSENTIALLY TO MEET NATO STANDARD RATION OF 1.5 TO 1.0 FOR ALL COMBAT AIRCRAFT FROM 1974 ONWARD. AIR RORCE ANTICIPATES NO PILOT OR TECHNICIAN RECRUITING PROBLEMS.

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2. DEFENSE EXPENDITURES.

A. REPLY TO DPQ(74) RECONFIRMS BELGIAN PLEDGE TO INCREASE ITS DEFENSE BUDGET BY AN ANNUAL AVERAGE OF FOUR PERCENT IN CONSTANT PRICES AND REPORTS A REAL INCREASE OF 5.5 PERCENT (AT 1973 PRICES) IN 1974 OVER 9173. DPQ(74) PROJECTS FOLLOWING LEVELS OF DEFENSE SPENDING THROUGH 1975 (LAST YEAR REPORTED) IN MILLIONS OF BELGIAN FRANCS:

	CURRENT PRICES	CONSTANT 1973 PRICES
CY 1973	48,941	48,941
CY 1974	57,315	51,635
CY 1975	64,465	52,840

PROJECTED ANNUAL REAL INCREASES (BASED ON 11 PERCENT ANNUAL RATE OF INFLATION) MEET FOUR PERCENT PROMISE AND ARE WELL ABOVE US OBJECTIVES (PRESENTED IN ONGOING MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE CONTEXT) FOR ANNUAL REAL INCREASE OF AT LEAST THREE PERCENT. PROJECTED REAL INCREASES APPARENTLY INCLUDE SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDS OF 200 MILLION

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IN 1974 AND 600 OR 800 MILLION (MEMORANDUM USES 2 FIGURES) IN 1975 TO COVER INCREASED COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH PROFESSIONALIZATION PLAN. DURING 1973 DTC MULTILATERAL REVIEW, BELGIUM CLAIMED PROFESSIONALIZATION FUNDS WOULD BE ADDITIONAL TO FOUR PERCENT PER ANNUM INCREASE (DPQ(74) MEMORANDUM MAKES SAME CLAIM) AND WOULD AMOUNT TO 850 MILLION IN 1974 (IN 1973 CONSTANT PRICES).

B. MEMORANDUM STATES IT IS STILL BELGIUM'S INTENTION TO LIMIT PERSONNEL EXPENDITURES TO NOT MORE THAN 53 PERCENT OF DEFENSE BUDGET. BLEGIUM CAN ONLY STAY BELOW THE 53 PERCENT LEVEL IF PERSONNEL EXPENDITURES DO NOT INCLUDE MILITARY RETIRMENT PAY. SPECIAL DISTRIBUTION TABLES REPORT A SLIGHT DROP IN TOTAL MILITARY PERSONNEL (FROM 106,603 IN 1973 TO 105, 796 IN 1974, TO 105,066 IN 1975). DECREASE IN PERSONNEL DOES NOT APPEAR SIGNIFICANT ENOUGH TO AUGMENT EQUIPMENT MODERNIZATION FUNDING SUBSTANTIALLY. HOWEVER, FUNDS FOR MAJOR EQUIPMENT AND AMMUNITION AS A PERCENTAGE OF DEFENSE BUDGET INCREASE MODESTLY FROM 9.2 PERCENT IN 1973 TO 10.5 PERCENT IN 1974, TO 11.1 PERCENT IN 1975.

C. DURING 1973 DRC MULTILATERAL REVIEW, BELGIANS SAID SHARE OF GNP FOR DEFENSE WOULD CLIMB GRADUALLY TO 3.4/3.5 PERCENT BY 1978. BELGIANS BASED THIS PLEASANT PROSPECT ON A FAVORABLE GNP GROWTH AND ON PROFESSIONALIZATION PLAN FUNDED SEPARATELY FROM ANNUAL FOUR PERCENT REAL INCREASE IN DEFENSE SPENDING.DPQ(74), TAKING ACCOUNT OF CURRENT WORLD ECONOMIC SITUATION, REPORTS SHARE

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OF GNP FOR DEFENSE AT 3.0 PERCENT IN 1973, 3.1 PERCENT IN 1974, AND 3.1 PERCENT IN 1975. THUS BELGIUM, DESPITE SIGNIFICANT VOLUME AUGMENTATIONS AND AN AVERAGE YEARLY REAL INCREASE IN DEFENSE SPENDING OF 4 PERCENT, APPEARS TO BE FACING DIFFICULTIES IN HOLDING SHARE OF GNP ABOVE 3 PERCENT.

3. PROPOSED USNATO POSITION FOR MULTILATERAL EXAMINATION. AT NATO'S MULTILATERAL EXAMINATION OF BELGIAN 1975 TO 1979 FORCE PLANS (TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR NOV 5), MISSION PROPOSES TO:

A. APPLAUD BELGIAN EFFORTS TO INCREASE DEFENSE SPENDING BY AN AVERAGE OF FOUR PERCENT PER ANNUM IN REAL TERMS AND ASK FOR CLARIFICATION OF PROFESSIONALIZATION PLAN FUNDING.

B. ASK IF BELGIUM STILL INTENDS TO INCREASE PERCENT OF GNP
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FOR DEFENSE.

C. ASK FOR CLARIFICATION OF PLANS REGARDING SHORT RANGE AT SYSTEMS AND URGE BELGIANS TO ACQUIRE A MODERN SHORT RANGE AT SYSTEM AND TO PROVIDE DETAILS ON ATTACK HELICOPTER ACQUISITION PROGRAM.

D. POINT OUT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INFORMATION IN DPQ(74) AND INFORMATION PROVIDED AT 1973 MULTILATERAL REVIEW CONCERNING MANNING OF EARMARKED AND ASSIGNED ARMY COMBAT UNITS AND REQUEST CLARIFICATION.

E. URGE ARMY AND NAVY TO IMPROVE EW CAPABILITY.

F. ASK IF NAVY STILL INTENDS TO EQUIP ASW ESCORTS WITH EXOCET MISSILE.

G. URGE AIR FORCE IN CONUNCTION WITH F-104 REPLACEMENT TO PROCURE MODERN AIR MUNITIONS (1A08) AND TO FURTHER IMPROVE ACTIVE AIR BASE DEFENSE (1A02 AND 1A24).

4. USNATO COORDINATED THIS MESSAGE WITH AMEMBASSY AND MAAG BRUSSELS.
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